

University YMCA
306 N. Brooks St.
Madison, Wisc. 53715
April 23, 1968

Gary Richard Schoener
Box 392, Mayo Hospital
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Gary,

It's too bad that I didn't think to get in touch with you last weekend when I was in Minneapolis, because I am very interested in discussing these questions with you. I have read both your articles in the Star and your article in the Ivory Tower, and I believe that Jonathan Sisson even introduced us once quite briefly in the Daily office a couple of years ago.

I did not know Mr. Nagell, though I think that Abe did know him. (Is he the fellow who fired the shots in the bank in El Paso before the assassination? If so, he and Abe talked several times. This fellow is, the last I heard of him, in Leavenworth.) Abe and I got to be quite good friends, and he too read your article in the Tower. I was very impressed with him as a man of integrity and conscientiousness, and I believe his story, wild and somewhat preposterous as it is. (He frequently told me that I was a fool to believe him, that he would never believe anything as far-out as the stories he was telling me--he simply could not yet accept that such injustices as he had experienced could happen here.)

I asked Abe just before I left whether he wanted me to tell his story, because I was somewhat afraid that it would get him in trouble there if a deal of publicity were raised now, but he said that he did want the publicity, thinking that he is safer in prison if the government is made aware that people are still interested in what happens to him. This is not totally idle speculation. There have been several threats on his life since his incarceration began; his wife was shot at in the kitchen of their home in January of this year; their house was burned once last year when she was visiting him; the insurance was just recently cancelled by the insurance company. Also, within the prison: once last year after he was threatened by another inmate, he was put in maximum security isolation "for his own protection" and kept there a month, despite the fact that the man who threatened him was transferred to another institution a week after the threat was made; again last year just after Mark Lane visited him he was put into "protective" isolation for about a month; during the first of these, a "psychiatrist" (All but two of the psychiatrists there--including Dr. Augustus F. Kinzel, who diagnosed Abe--are just out of med school, working with the PHS, without having done their internships, yet they make decisions which have very weighty effects on men's lives.) visited Abe, prescribed a tranquilizing medication (which Abe suspected was thiorazine and did not actually take), and diagnosed him as "sociopathic."

Abe showed me a printed excerpt from one of his trials, which I read; it was obvious that the judge was heavily biased against him. Prison grapevine (from several reliable individuals) says that Spagnoli (the chief witness against Bolden), who is also doing federal time, now admits that he lied & helped to frame Abe because he thought he could get less time; however, the judge (who was the same one who tried Abe) gave him 15 years for the counterfeiting rap (for which Abe had

arrested him), after which Spagnoli jumped up & shouted, "There was a deal! I lied in Bolden's trial..." but the judge wouldn't listen.

Abe has been filing writ after writ, all very carefully drawn up. He has undertaken quite a serious study of law since his incarceration. However, it is obvious that they intend to keep him locked up, as they continue to disregard both Abe's rights and normal court procedure in dealing with him. He is a very plucky individual, but he is naturally quite discouraged because he is not quite sure even yet why they framed him.

Abe suspects that somebody thinks he knows more than he actually does know about the assassination. He keeps wracking his brain, trying to think what it could possibly be that he knows; he told me once that he thinks he might even have met some of the conspirators or overheard something which he didn't react suspiciously to & therefore doesn't remember; the conspirators, however, might not realize his ignorance and so want him well out of the way.

There are two things he told me that seem rather important. The first is that he was working in the Secret Service office in Chicago in October of 1963, when President Kennedy was due for a visit there. The Secret Service, however, got wind of an assassination plan involving some Cubans; they knew a few names but were unable to round up the entire gang, so they relayed word to Washington & the President's trip was cancelled. According to Abe, there is no mention of this anywhere in the Warren Report, though it seems very suspect. When Lane visited Abe a few months ago & Abe mentioned this plot to him as well as a few of the names he could remember, Abe said that Lane got very excited & said that those names were some which Garrison has arrived at independently as being involved in Dallas, without any knowledge of the Chicago incident.

Even more bizarre is his account of an incident in Washington a few days before the assassination. He says that he was called into conference with a CIA representative (whether at CIA headquarters or not I'm not certain) and told that the CIA had a special assignment for him which involved a total change of identity for an indefinite period of time, maybe short, maybe over a period of years; he was to work at Bethesda Naval Hospital under this new identity; he was to tell no one, including his wife, of his whereabouts or identity. He told me that he went home that night and discussed it with his wife (against orders) and came back the next day and told them that he would not accept. The man became very upset, told him that he could not refuse, that he had to do it; etc., but Abe walked out on him. He says that when the assassination occurred and the announcement was made that the body was being taken to Bethesda Naval Hospital, he was stunned by the coincidence. He still does not know quite what to make of this or whether there was any connection, as, of course, neither do I.

I think that if you intend to publish any material on Abe, it would be wise to check with his wife, Mrs. Barbara Bolden, at 7632 Sangamon St., Chicago, Illinois, beforehand. She can probably give you more current information as well. You may mention my name, as she knows, I think, who I am. I've been meaning to write her myself and probably shall this week. Also, as I am on parole until October 1970, I should prefer that my name be kept out of public pronouncements, unless, of course, it were something that could be of benefit to Abe.

I suppose I should mention that, though I am curious about the truth of the whole Kennedy assassination, my prime concern in this is with Abe. He is my friend; he is a kind and generous man who is suffering a horrible injustice. It may be that his fate will be forever involved in the outcome of the present investigations and trials. I do hope that Abe will be considered as a human being and not simply as a source of information and attention.

Because of the scanning problem, I think it best to use my work address, which is University YMCA, 306 North Brooks Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53715. The phone number there is 257-2534, and you are most apt to get ahold of me between 2 and 4:30 p.m., though I am usually there during most of every weekday, should you wish to call. Effective next week, my home address will be 31 E. Gorham St., Madison, and I shall have no home telephone. If you should be in Madison, please look me up, and I shall try to contact you next time I'm in Minneapolis.

Sincerely,

Francis E. Galt

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